

Filed for intro on 02/04/97
SENATE BILL 103 By
Rochelle

HOUSE BILL 274
By Buck

AN ACT to designate a certain bridge on State Route 85 in Smith County as the "Carl W. Woodard Memorial Bridge".

WHEREAS, from time to time, this General Assembly has seen fit to name certain public highways and bridges to honor those outstanding public servants whose efforts have redounded to the great benefit of their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, Carl Washington Woodard was born August 10, 1909, the sixth child of Robert Lee and Holly Delora Woodard in the Friendship Hollow community of Smith County; and

WHEREAS, he was a "proud" 1931 graduate of Carthage High School. In 1934, he married Athalene Halliburton and to this union was born two children, Nancy Evelyn and Richard Wayne; he would later add three grandchildren and one great-grandchild to the list of his progeny; and

WHEREAS, in 1937, he joined his brother Cecil Woodard as partner in a small neighborhood store which they called Woodard Brothers General Merchandise; located in the Defeated Creek community in Smith County. the business prospered as the brothers enlarged their inventory and worked hard to meet the purchasing needs of their neighbors; and

WHEREAS, in 1938, most men in Smith County were farmers and their wives were homemakers. To enlarge his customer base, Mr. Woodard operated a peddling truck, which he drove Monday through Saturday through neighboring communities; and

43095667

43095667

001008

00100816

WHEREAS, when Cecil Woodard died in 1947, Carl Woodard continued to operate the store and was the sole support of both his and his brother's family equally, until six years later when Cecil's daughter graduated from high school and joined Mr. Woodard as a clerk and bookkeeper in the business; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Woodard's reputation as an extremely honest and fair dealing merchant spread throughout his and neighboring counties. As his reputation grew, so did his inventory. The store sold gas and groceries, hardware, clothing, furniture, appliances, building supplies and farm supplies; and

WHEREAS, by the time Mr. Woodard retired on January 1, 1986, the business enjoyed sales of nearly \$2 million dollars a year; and

WHEREAS, the many contributions that "Mr. Carl" as he was known to so many, made to his community also included his generosity in extending no-interest credit to those who needed it. He would allow newlyweds to purchase their furniture on long-term credit at no interest; and

WHEREAS, farm families often charged all their purchases from one year until their cash crop sold a year later. They were charged no interest. Many times families were unable to pay off all their debt, but if Mr. Woodard believed them to be honest, credit would be extended an extra year; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Woodard was scrupulously honest and a modest man, but was also known for his ability to "figure" in his head. He could add a column of three digit numbers, plus interest without the benefit of paper. A columnist in a local newspaper once wrote that the business had a computer and it was located in Mr. Woodard's head; and

WHEREAS, in spite of the fact that the store was open at least 12 hours a day, Monday through Saturday, Mr. Woodard would graciously respond to a neighbor's need if called for emergency items on Sunday; and

WHEREAS, a devout Christian, Mr. Woodard evidenced his robust belief in the Lord through his membership in the Chapel Missionary Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, he was also co-owner with another brother, the late E. B. Woodard, and later with his son, Richard, of the Lebanon Distributing Company, located on Carthage Highway in Lebanon; and

WHEREAS, after his “retirement” he worked daily with his son-in-law, Glenn Pettross, in the operation of Home Supply Warehouse on Dixon Springs Highway in Tanglewood; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Woodard enjoyed his contact with people and saw his business as an opportunity to help people; believing fervently in the axiom: “Let me dwell in a house by the side of the road and be a friend to man”, Mr. Woodard followed this sage advice by working in a store by the side of the road and being a true friend to man; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Woodard passed from this life to far better existence on December 5, 1994; and

WHEREAS, when the Cordell Hull Dam was completed in 1966, Woodard Brothers General Merchandise had to be relocated approximately 1/10 mile from its original site; and

WHEREAS, on State Route 85-Lankford Branch in Smith County a certain bridge is located on the exact spot where Mr. Woodard’s store stood for 29 years, and it is therefore extremely appropriate to name such bridge in his honor; and

WHEREAS, the Smith County Commission has expressed a desire to name such bridge as a tribute to Mr. Woodard’s bountiful life of service to others, and this General Assembly most heartily concurs with such proposal; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any other provision of law to the contrary, Bridge No. 80-SR85-4.29 on State Route 85-Lankford Branch in Smith County is hereby designated as the “Carl W. Woodard Memorial Bridge” to honor the memory of this peerless public servant who,

throughout his life, worked with purpose and commitment to ensure the growth and prosperity of his community.

SECTION 2. The Department of Transportation is hereby directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating such bridge as the "Carl W. Woodard Memorial Bridge".

SECTION 3. The erection of such signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

SECTION 4. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.